THE ETHICS OF REBELLION

—Michael Harrington

THE

Commonweal

AN AFRICAN NOTEBOOK

by Daniel M. Friedenberg

A Program for Liberal Education

by Oscar William Perlmutter

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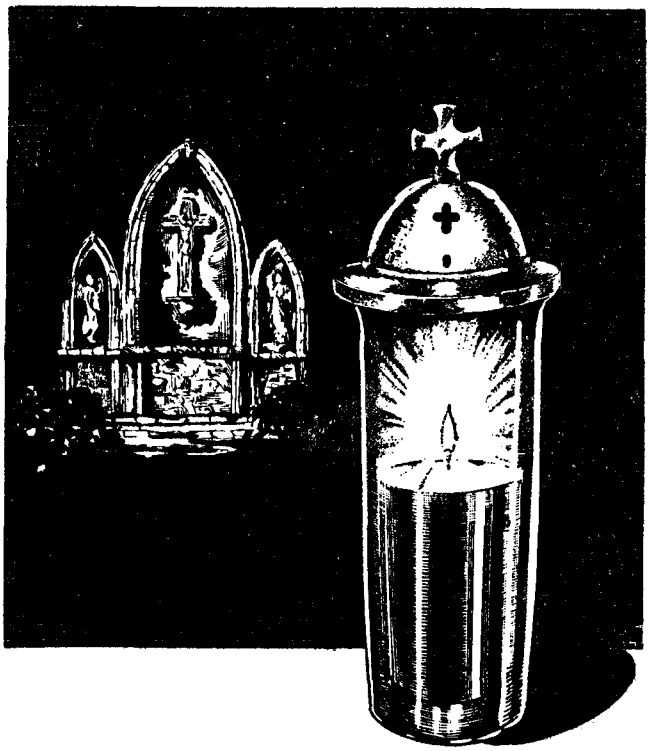

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THE
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week by week

RELIGION AND EDUCATION

EARLY in the new year, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., presented Harvard University with a gift of one million dollars in securities. The gift was a contribution toward revitalizing Harvard's Divinity School, a project dear to Harvard's new young president, Nathan M. Pusey. A renewed emphasis on spiritual life at Harvard, Mr. Rockefeller said in a letter to Dr. Pusey, "promises to have a far-reaching influence on education in this country." Dr. Pusey in acknowledging the gift said that he and those who agree with him about the place of religion in higher education are "more determined than ever to go forward . . . with the effort to strengthen the influence of religion in education and in the life of our Nation."

When the cultural history of our times is written, probably nothing will seem quite as absurd as the arrogance with which the intelligentsia of the past two or three decades flaunted their own theological ignorance. Dr. Pusey himself has spoken sadly of a "very widespread religious illiteracy" and added, wisely, that the absence of faith itself is even more devastating. The development of Harvard's Divinity School is highly significant. Dr. Pusey has acknowledged the University's obligation "to confront the evil ideas current in the East with the ideals which have been fundamental in the growth of Western civilization."

The baneful ideas Dr. Pusey referred to may be current in the East, but it should not be forgotten that they were born in the West. Karl Marx was no Oriental; neither was Friedrich Engels, Ludwig Andrea Feuerbach—nor for that matter Adolf Hitler. The unpleasant fact is that modern totalitarianism is a Western phenomenon which has taken root in the East. It is not without meaning that the aggressive secularists and forthright materialists of the Orient today in many cases got their intellectual formation in American universities.

This is not to join in the chorus of those who charge our universities with being hotbeds of subversion and Communist thinking. It is to say, though, that there have been two almost contradictory trends in higher education for a long time—the one, grounded in the intellect, vigorously secularistic, iconoclastic, arrogantly rationalistic, antisupernatural and genteelly materialistic; the other, grounded in the emotions and cultural feelings, dutifully pious, piously dutiful, gently conventional and conventionally gentle. Everyone knows instances of the professor who takes potshots at religious belief from Monday till Friday and then shows up for services on Sunday morning.

Frank Sheed, the Catholic publisher, has pointed out that a world modeled according to the teachings of many cold-blooded classroom materialists, with their mechanistic theories about man, would not be safe for people as gentle as professors. They wouldn't last overnight in a world which took their theories seriously and they know it, Mr. Sheed said wryly. But men can resist just about everything but logic, so it was probably inevitable that some people in the world were going to reshape society according to the godless ideas current in some quite respectable classrooms.

THE temptation now is to think of religion as a kind of cold-war weapon. We stand in danger of seeing ourselves as the righteous and godly versus the evil and ungodly. In that vision of ourselves and the world we live in lurk all the possibilities of spiritual complacency, hypocrisy and self-righteousness which are the very death of the religious spirit.

From time to time President Eisenhower has declared that we are a great nation because we are a good nation—which is at best a dubious theological proposition. One cannot measure American greatness in terms essentially materialistic and then attribute it all to our spiritual resources. But the real temptation Americans face today is not the Eisenhower proposition but its opposite: that is, to start believing that we are a good nation because we are a great nation. From it follows the corollary that if we were just a little better, we would be just a little

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greater. This might be the fatal flaw in much of our thinking about the religious revival supposedly going on in our country. Religion is not that unsubtle an acquisition. True religion allows of no uses other than the worship of God. As soon as you start thinking about how you are going to use religion, you no longer have it to use.

Dr. Pusey is quite right in putting the emphasis on faith. Faith is the essence of religion, and it comes singly to individuals, through the power of the Holy Spirit. You cannot sell religion when you think the nation needs it, as if it were soap. If you believe, yourself, you can only pray that God will give the gift of faith to others and help to facilitate their receiving it by removing prejudice, superstition and intellectual difficulties. You can show that while faith is supernatural, it is not irrational. And that would seem to be the greatest contribution the university can make. In the light of the recent history of education, it would be quite a contribution indeed.

AID TO HEALTH INSURANCE

WHILE the Blue Cross and similar hospital insurance plans in the past few years have grown to the point that they now include millions of American families, they still have not succeeded in reaching large sectors of the population. These voluntary plans are beyond the resources of the lowest income groups. They obviously cannot provide for the aged and disabled—the very people in greatest need of medical and hospital care. But they have compiled a record of solid and growing accomplishment in a period of sustained employment.

The private commission on financing hospital care which has just completed its comprehensive investigations recognizes the limitations of Blue Cross and similar plans as far as coverage goes. Moreover, the commission is fearful as to what will happen to these hospital plans (and to hospitals) if there should be any serious unemployment. It calls upon employers and the federal government to make provision for medical and hospital care in their retirement pension plans.

The Administration makes no pretense of taking over any sizable chunk of the nation's nine billion dollar annual medical bill. With his abhorrence of statism and the constant objective of decentralization Mr. Eisenhower says it is not up to the federal government to do the job. He sees Washington's role as one of encouraging state, local and private agencies—as well as individuals—to make the necessary provisions for general medical care, research and rehabilitation of the physically handicapped. Federal aid would be on a modest scale, from "reinsurance" of non-profit hospitalization to grants to states. Blue Cross and similar hospital plans fit in well with the incumbent political philosophy.

NEXT WEEK

MAX FISCHER describes a return to divided Berlin:

". . . I found restaurants which not only offered their old specialties, but where there were the same old waiters with the mannerisms of the past, seeming almost like puppets. There was a famous man of letters who used to promenade in a red waistcoat and he still sports the same style, although his waistline has shrunk by two-thirds. In a cabaret, an elegant ventriloquist, a shadow of his former self, still tells exactly the same jokes he told two decades ago. . . . One meets old friends with whom one begins a conversation as if the discussion had been interrupted only a half hour ago; but again others are so drastically changed that one is tempted to doubt their identity. Thus in looking for the new features of Berlin, one is always haunted by stubbornly surviving reminders of the past. . . ."

THE DANGERS OF AWARENESS

WE note with interest the formation of "Aware, Inc.," a new group organized to combat "the Communist conspiracy in the entertainment world." "Aware" will have a wide range of activities. It will "monitor and investigate Communist influences in all the varied aspects of entertainment," study publications on Communism and "issue reading lists," compile "factual material on Communist activity within the [entertainment] industry for the use of members, etc." It will also "issue studies exposing the misused slogans of the Communist conspiracy, such as 'thought control,' 'blacklisting,' 'private political beliefs,' 'guilt by association,' and others."

Mr. Godfrey P. Schmidt, President of "Aware, Inc.," has announced that his group's membership is growing rapidly and includes persons both in and out of the entertainment field. He assures us, however, that " 'Aware' will not replace, compete or interfere with any existing organization." "Red Channels," "Counterattack," "The Firing Line," "The Minute Women" and the numerous other "aware" publications and groups will apparently still be with us.

This is comforting knowledge. Patriotism-as-pres-

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sure seems to have room for all. But one danger from this immediately suggests itself: Within a democracy, too many pressure groups banded together on one side can, whatever their motives, be themselves a threat. They are apt to lose their sense of humor and begin to think that anyone who questions their judgment is somehow unpatriotic, somehow *un*aware. For the sake of democracy's health they should therefore be balanced-off by other pressure groups.

And so the organization of "Aware, Inc." suggests the need for another group which will emphasize values which the "aware," in their zeal, may forget. One of the major functions of this other group, for example, might be to issue studies pointing out that merely because the Communists use certain slogans such as "thought control," "blacklisting," "private political beliefs," or "guilt by association" does not necessarily mean that these slogans have no basis in the realities of present-day American life. Another function of this group might be to study the publications of certain professional patriots and compile factual material on their activities within the entertainment industry.

Such counter-activities would provide a wholesome check on what might otherwise lead to excesses of "awareness" and consequent confusions of nonconformity with subversion by the first group. It would certainly help to restore a sense of humor —and perhaps a sense of balance—to our humorless, unbalanced times.

This new group, concerned over the dangers which seem bound to accompany a too self-conscious "awareness" might call itself "Beware." We hope, however, that it would remain unincorporated.

YALTA AND TAFT

TWO names from the recent past persist in the events happening in Washington today. One name is Yalta, the other is Taft.

Yalta is with us in the debate over the Bricker Amendment, for Yalta is the symbol of the kind of executive agreements the Bricker Amendment is intended to prevent. The amendment is also intended to block any possible threat to U. S. sovereignty from the United Nations.

The Bricker Amendment would prevent any treaty from becoming "effective as internal law" unless or until there was passed "legislation which would be valid in the absence of a treaty." The Constitution states: "all treaties made, or which shall be made, under the authority of the United States shall be the supreme law of the land." The Bricker Amendment would also give the Congress "power to regulate all executive and other agreements with any foreign power or international organization."

What this would mean is that a treaty would no longer be an instrument negotiated by the President and ratified by two-thirds of the Senate. It would, in addition, be subject to the Congress' passing legislation to implement it, and in some cases, to each of the forty-eight states' passing such legislation.

As Mr. Eisenhower observed, this takes us back to the Articles of Confederation. From 1787 to 1954 we have conducted our foreign affairs on the terms of our present Constitution, and we have, by and large, got along quite well. Senator Bricker and his associates fear that future Presidents and Senators will not be so wise as the ones we have now or have had in the past, so they propose to hamstring them. Future Presidents and Senators will not be able to sell our country down the river, if the Bricker Amendment is passed; they won't be able to do much of anything in the way of conducting foreign relations. But Senator Bricker, whose heart lies in isolationism, won't mind that.

The second recurring word is Taft. It recurs because the new cold war policy which Mr. Dulles has been outlining in his recent speeches is remarkably like that of the late Senator from Ohio. And in its way it is as profound a change in policy as the Bricker Amendment would be a change in traditional legislative-executive balance. The new policy sees an atomic striking force centered in the United States, and a minimum of infantry along the cold war frontiers. Together with these goes a threat to launch atomic war if the frontiers are violated.

This is the policy which Mr. Eisenhower presumably came home from NATO to fight. But it now is the policy towards which his Administration appears to be moving.

It means—stripped of verbiage about gaining the initiative—a lessening of reliance on NATO; a determination never again to become involved in a Korea; and a threat, not to block Communist aggression wherever it occurs, but to start World War III if Communist aggression ever again takes place.

This is the policy of calculated risk with a vengeance. It means that one slip in the part of the Russians, or the satellites, or of ourselves, sends us not to a bruising fall, but off the cliff into Grand Canyon.

What is the reasoning behind this policy? It is impossible to escape the conclusion that the primary reason is economy. There certainly is merit in the argument that a series of small wars could bleed to death a nation such as the United States. But the risk involved in Mr. Dulles' alternative, if he really means what he says, is hair-raising.

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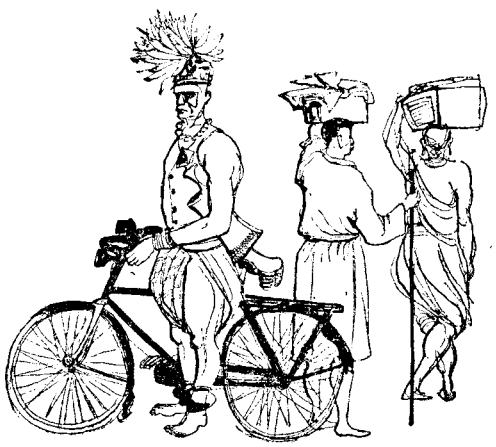
An African Notebook

SCENES, IMPRESSIONS, REFLECTIONS ON A TRIP ALONG AFRICA'S WEST COAST

DANIEL M. FRIEDENBERG

DAKAR, SENEGAL. Our boat glided into a city shrouded in silence. The entire Negro working population was out on strike, protesting the excessive differential in wages paid between white and black labor. The whites, who of course continued working, managed to unload the smaller freight but demurred swinging off an American locomotive lashed to the forward deck. So the French government called in the native troops to finish the job. Their ebony skin spotted with sweat, the Senegalese laughed and chatted while working, seemingly unaware that their strikebreaking was defeating the hopes of their brothers and fathers in the Medina, the native quarter. Coming from Morocco, where the French would never openly dare to employ native troops to break such a strike, the contrast was seizing.



The expanding economic opportunities at Dakar have attracted natives from all over black Africa, whose contrasts in coloring and facial structure are as widely divergent as those between a Swede and a Sicilian. Yet, creeping like a subterranean stream through the city, is one and only one force that has sufficient historical maturity to unite these dissonant peoples: and that is Islam. Christianity holds the center of town, the Cathedral, the *haut-monde* commercial and residential quarters. But—where not still at the bushman totem-and-tabu level—the religion of the conquered is Moslem. One senses this through an overpowering succession of little things: the extended use of the guttural Arabic tongue; students reading Koranic script to blind beggars; the popularity of Moorish and Turkish robes and the crimson Fez or tasseled Ottoman hat surmounted by the Crescent and Star; advertisements for the Pilgrimage to Mecca; the separate judicial courts for Moslems; the architectural victory in the native quarter of the "key" formed entrance and elaborate arabesques over the common European post and lintel; and last but not least, the "cooperation" of the Syndicate of Moslem Workers in the strike, as one Christian put it with a grimace of disgust. The French are not unaware that their mortal enemy is creeping southward from his Arab stronghold. But they stand theologically helpless on one important score: Islam makes absolutely no distinction, practical as well as merely theoretic, between black and white, and hence is spiritually more appealing to the pagan bushmen seeking a new faith in the strange jumbled cities of the coast. At the Bodega, the principal night club of Dakar, the French paid their unconscious respects to this knowledge. The star of the show was a tall French girl with a husky, raucous singing voice. The climax of her performance was the burlesqued history of a certain Mohammed Ben Muslim, an ignorant farmer who kept making a fool of himself. The song was conducted in dialogue; each time the *fellah* got himself into more trouble, the singer would contemptuously call "Mohammed" and the all-European audience would respond with loud sneers of disdain; at the end, when he was finally humiliated, she shrieked with absolute contempt "Mohammed!," and the audience broke into excited cheers. Parody is a form of folklore respect; no one pays much attention to the Prophet of the conquered unless he is greatly feared.

CONAKRY, FRENCH GUINEA. Four thousand Frenchmen are smeared like a thin white paste over twenty-five times their number of natives in this capital city of Guinea. As the freighter moves south, the conditions grow more primitive. The young women walk with their breasts uncovered; many men wear simple loin cloths. Grapefruit, coconuts, pineapples, mangos, bananas, avocados and many species of unfamiliar fruits and nuts grow wild in the city parks and

Mr. Friedenberg is a New York businessman and writer. This article is the outcome of a recent trip to Africa, his third since the war.

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along the boulevards. As I was crossing a main street, a heavy ripe mango dropped from the overhead foliage; not one of the natives made a motion to pick it up.

When I spoke of their strange disinterest to a Frenchman who was supervising a group of blacks building a small one-story building, he groaned and added: "That's just the trouble. You can't get them to work on a schedule; they may show up for a day or two but then they'll get bored and climb up a tree for lunch. How can you civilize a bunch of monkeys?"

Although the French foreman probably exaggerated, there is a kernel of truth in his remark. In Europe, even in North Africa, there is a direct ratio between unemployment and starvation: and the latter forms a powerful incentive for disciplined activity. But in the tropical expanse of West Africa, lack of work does not automatically entail loss of food. Almost everything needed by the native grows wild and in plentiful supply; and the coastal waters swarm with fish. The black man has been educated to certain new tastes which require money, but if the labor seems excessive or he is naturally indolent, the worst that can happen is that he must revert to the diet of his fathers. The laborer is not *forced* to accommodate himself to our standards. Sex pressure, another powerful civilizing influence, is likewise lacking since women are still considered to a great extent communal property. With the drives of hunger and sex neutralized, what we call "civilization" will be a long time forthcoming.

SASSANDRA, IVORY COAST. The freighter took on a load of black gold, "our slaves" as the Chief Mate called them: motored out in a deep barge, some 70 muscular blacks shimmied up ropes to the hold and disappeared. This country is know by the Senegalese as "Croue" and hence the workers, probably as a result of some English wit, are called "Crewmen." The Crewmen are itinerant laborers who live on the ships traveling the West Coast of Africa, loading and unloading the freight in those ports—still in the majority—where no dock facilities have been erected. They sleep on deck, each with his tiny wooden case holding all his possessions, eat the scraps and get paid sixty cents a day.

The difference between French and English colonial attitudes can be illustrated by the Gallic reaction to these simple blacks. Standing on the bridge, the young French officers referred to them as "monkeys," "apes," "subhuman," etc; and then, being acquainted with many of them from former trips, went down to the lower deck to shake hands, chat and laugh over the good times they had together in the past. The French intellectually despise what they call "inferior" peoples, but are so warm and good-natured by disposition, they end up *practically* embodying a lack of prejudice. The so-called "liberal" evolved from an Anglo-Saxon culture, on the other hand, believes *theoretically* in the equality of men but actually wants nothing to do with peoples aesthetically displeasing; i.e., whose looks, dress, body odor or color seem alien.

By a strange paradox, the English have seized on this instinctive weakness and turned it to colonial strength. Today, Gambia, the Gold Coast, Nigeria and Sierra Leone—the British possessions along the West African coast—are all Commonwealth nations and making extraordinary strides toward self-government. Black legislators whose fathers used stone axes are wielding the gavel. But the shrewd English have yielded a measure of political control to consolidate their economic position; and Lever Bros, Ltd. can say more, and with greater authority, through a black than a white mouth. The English have learned from history and are infinitely adaptable; the French, politically speaking, are clumsy louts. What does an Englishman care to do with some uncouth black with sweaty palms when, by manipulating him, he can stay at home or at the Residence Country Club ten months of the year instead? The French lost everything—both economically and politically—in Syria and are about to repeat the pattern in Indochina; they still cannot gain enough national wisdom to forfeit the prestige to secure the cash. And so the French, with all their warmth and lack of color prejudice, not the aloof English, will be the first to suffer from West African nationalism.

ABIDJAN, IVORY COAST. The planters and bureaucrats of this tropical rain forest area, center for most of the mahogany logging of the world, have waxed rich indeed if one can judge by the luxuriant villas laid out in the European section. But far more interesting is the old city, Treichville, just across the bridge, where live the bulk of the Negroes. Sociologically, it represents an intermediate stage between a primitive village and the modern integrated slum. On a flat sandy spit, in simple grid pattern has been erected an enormous settlement of frame houses, ranging from dilapidated, half-collapsed shacks composed of boxwood to neat cottages stuccoed over with a pink or yellow coloring mix. Like ants, the blacks swarmed everywhere: as usual, children were the principal slum crop. For rhythm and color it cannot be denied that the Negro is to the windward of his blanched brethren. The women—the female of the species in the most complete Darwinian sense—were clad in winding cloths of striking colors, sulphur yellow, royal blue, Chinese red, spring green, usually contrasting to heighten the effect. On almost every street, musical amateurs were beating home-made drums, often in unison, creating monotonous but seductive rhythms. Pendant crosses mixed with Fezzes; to the outward eye, the white man has not yet succeeded in imposing his theological discords on these naturally joyous people. French was heard,

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but it was minor to the tribal jargons. The total effect was of a community in transition; but I sensed nothing of the tensions of the Casablanca slums or even the instinctive inferiority complexes of the American Negro. It is in such rare communities that you feel the pulse of a new Africa beating.

The agent for the French shipping line on which I had secured passage, a young Parisian, lunched with me. We were laughing together at a story and the Negro servitor good-naturedly joined in. Without warning, the Frenchman whirled on the servant:

"What are you laughing at?" he exclaimed, using the *"tu"* form which in French is invariably directed at children. "Who gave you permission to laugh?"

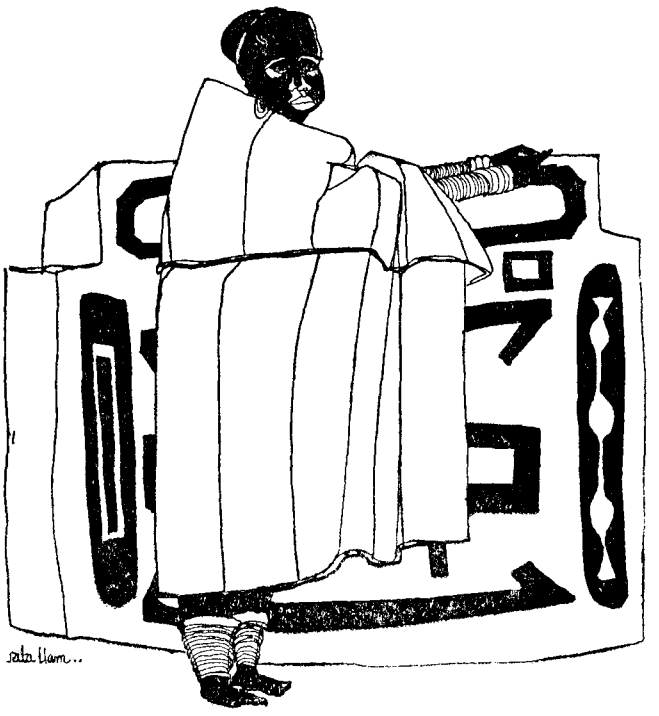
"Nobody, Monsieur," stammered the servant.

"Then apologize," said Monsieur grimly.

"I am terribly sorry, sir," answered the waiting boy humbly.

History may record that the decline of the white man's suzerainty in Asia occurred, not that he was any weaker, but because the myth of his invincibility had been destroyed by the Japanese: and a myth is harder to exorcise than massed legions. As long as the black still believes the white man is somehow mystically entitled to power, to the *tu* form of address, all goes well. In fact, amusingly enough, the serving boy didn't seem to take offense: is it not proof of divine attributes to be unpredictable, inexplicable? that is the way of the gods. When the Negro will resent this attitude—as the Moslem, with his own set of historic values, does to the north of Black Africa—then Monsieur take notice!

LOME, TOGO. As part of the War to Save Democracy, the French took over most of the old German colony of Togo, conceding to the British a slice to the West; but since world opinion had advanced in hypocrisy, if not morality, it was called a Mandate rather than incorporated into the French Union. The United Nations, collecting this unwholesome debris from the defunct League of Nations, exercises theoretic sovereignty over the French, who remain in control "until the Togo people attain political maturity." Occasionally a tribal leader sneaks through a complaint to the Subcommittee on Mandated Peoples, for which all and sundry are grateful, since without complaints the committee would be dissolved and several comfortable jobs lost.



Actually, the French reaped little except another spoonful of prestige. The Togo is noted in West Africa as a trouble area and spreads its infectious black nationalism to the surrounding French territories. The underlying reason for this discontent is that the third going to Britain has already advanced on the road to self-government and the French Togois, unfamiliar with white man's logic, don't see why they shouldn't be allowed the same rights.

Opposite the Catholic Church, commanding the prize position of the large native market, are located the offices of the witch doctors. Spread out on the ground was a most astounding inventory of clinical equipment: skulls and jaws of chickens and rodents; crocodile teeth; antelope horns; dried intestine of elephant; phallos of lion; monkey's paws; giraffe ears; ostrich feathers; claws of duck; crisscrossed bones; ligaments; and greasy herbaceous stews. One witch doctor, who spoke a little French, was delighted at my interest in his elevated art.

"Do you *really* believe these help?" I couldn't avoid asking.

"Of course." He smiled in the knowing way one does with uninstructed children. "Rub this on"—he pointed to a vile black mush and indicated the chest and arms by rubbing himself—"and you will stay in good health."

I graciously declined.

"This," he continued, indicating a rotting, bulbous mass, "comes from lion and will make you"—a big smile and in the well-nigh universal gesture, he flexed his right arm and fist—"good at making children".

The Church bells rang out the hour across the plaza. The vendor of witchcraft piously made the sign of the Cross.

"Are you a Christian?" I asked in surprise.

"Certainly," he said, and flashing his yellow teeth, pulled from beneath his shirt a worn Saint Christopher's medal. "This is also good to ward off the evil spirits," he continued. Then he lowered his voice cautiously. "But I have something else, very cheap, if you have an enemy. . . ."

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COTONOU, DAHOMEY. The King of Dahomey, at the turn of the century, squeezed to the east by the British in Nigeria and the Germans to the west in Togo, called in the French and made a treaty whereby he would retain his throne "and authority over the moral interests of his people": this was told to me with a straight face by one of the twelve hundred white men who administer the state.

After being vaulted high through the air in a bosun's chair attached to a crane and dumped into a landing craft pitching heavily on seas infested with sharks (one boat had turned over the day before), I was so glad to be alive my first impression of Cotonou was most exalted. The French, to the area left of the wharf, have built a postcard imitation of Provence that would be recognizable to anyone familiar with the paintings of Van Gogh's Arles period. Tall pines waved in the sea breeze, filled with singing birds. The yellow stucco houses with their red tiled roofs were set at some distance from each other, separated by walls of latticework in a geometric pattern or fences covered with vines. Their windows were masked by high green shutters to keep out the storms and excessive sun.

But where, I kept asking myself, did the native population, the real Dahomois, live?

The answer was shortly forthcoming. On the way back I strolled to the junction where the Gulf of Guinea meets the narrow inlet of Lake Nakoue. As I approached, I saw a long brushwood fence.

A complete native village had been built abutting the fence separating it from Provence! But the use of the word "native" gives one accustomed to our civilization an erroneous idea of what this implies. V. Gordon Childe, the famous Australian archaeologist, defined the Old Stone Age as a period when "men relied for a living entirely on hunting, fishing, and gathering berries, roots, slugs and shell-fish." This native village went back to that remote past which our ancestors surpassed many thousands of years ago, a level of culture that Abraham, Sargon and Cheops would have sneered to see. The "houses," if the word be generically admitted, were three walls of desiccated palm fronds woven together, the front being open, with another section thrown over the top to make a roof; the floor was the original sand. Huge piles of oyster shells were stacked high in the narrow corridors between the huts. A carpet and cloud of fleas hung over decayed fish rotting in the sun, mixing with the acrid-sweet odor of dirty native bodies and the sharper putrescence of excrement.

Leisurely Provence linked with a paleolithic village: two sides of a coin minted together; and the question is whether the former could exist without the latter. As long as our methods of making wealth consist only in snatching what nature has deposited, history is bound to be pessimistic. Following that logic, Cato the Elder of Rome was quite right in sprinkling salt on the ashes of Carthage. By the law of averages, it may next be the turn of the black man to colonize the European coast.

In the midst of the native village, I stumbled over a Negro dressed in white man's clothes, carrying a French book. He eyed me quizzically. He stood in his father's house carrying a power more potent than the atomic bomb: white man's culture, capsuled to leap twenty-five thousand years in one generation. What he *really* thinks may be the answer to the mystery of both his and our future.

THE SAINT XAVIER STUDY

A Program for Liberal Education

OSCAR WILLIAM PERLMUTTER

ONE year ago the Fund for the Advancement of Education, in a mood of self-criticism, chose twenty-two American colleges and universities, in the area of liberal education, to undertake "self studies" of their aims and programs of instruction. Saint Xavier College in Chicago was one of two Catholic institutions selected. Saint Xavier's completed self study, titled "The Liberal Education of the Christian Person," is unique for two reasons: first, it not only considers liberal collegiate education but the entire program of studies—from first grade through college; and secondly, the Self Study gave rise to a set of plans calling for one of the most comprehensive revisions of an educational system ever undertaken in America. By the fall of 1955—by which time Saint Xavier is scheduled to move to a new, larger campus—the first

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changes will have been initiated at all levels of the school system. The aim of the college is to establish a model system of liberal education.

One of the fundamental premises underlying the college's approach is that American education needs a thorough overhauling and that this cannot be achieved unless one works with the school system as a whole. Education goes on throughout one's life, not only during the years of formal schooling. At each of the three levels of the school system the fragmentation of the curriculum has resulted in the schools becoming, as a learned British divine once observed, "a place where a multitude of studies are conducted, with no relation between them except those of simultaneity and juxtaposition." Waste of time, overlapping, duplication, and omissions in the program of studies are charges that educators freely admit.

The Sisters of Mercy of the Chicago Province, who conduct Saint Xavier College and some sixty secondary and elementary schools, are in a position to do what many educators throughout the country have been speculating about but are unable to undertake: that is, to articulate all the levels of a school system under the unified direction of a collegiate faculty and in accord with a coherent philosophy of education. Most educators—including Catholics—lack the administrative controls or philosophical formulations and consensus necessary for such an undertaking. The heart of the Saint Xavier College Self Study is not educational administration but a unique exposition of a theory of liberal education.

IF I had to summarize that theory and give its essence in one paragraph, I would say that liberal education is conceived as a part of the total education of the person and is concerned with intellectual virtue; its goal is wisdom and contemplation. The task of a liberal school system is to transmit and advance Christian learning and provide everyone with a unified view of our cultural heritage. The liberal arts, precisely understood as liberal arts, should be taught to all students in a free society, and comprise the substance of secondary education—what the Self Study refers to as the Liberal Arts High School. General education and liberal-arts education occur simultaneously; higher learning at the level of the college complete the *formal* task of liberal education by concentrating on the arts and sciences and integrating these under wisdom. Teachers, on all levels, must be given an adequate opportunity to become liberally educated themselves.

The final goal of the liberal school system is to help the person acquire wisdom: the wisdom of Sacred Scriptures and theology; the philosophical wisdom within the grasp of human reason; and the practical wisdom contained in moral and social studies. It pertains to wisdom to order—either in some area of knowledge or in some area of conduct. The disintegration of liberal learning in modern times is due to several factors, and the systematic disparagement of philosophical and theological studies is chief among them.

The road to wisdom is long, and the lower schools must prepare the way. With respect to the young child the school has a twofold function: first, to transmit that part of the culture that cannot properly be acquired through ordinary and casual social relationships; and secondly, to assist in the intellectual growth of the child from the earlier stage of facts and experience to the higher levels of the arts and sciences preparatory to wisdom. It is the task of the school to enlarge the cultural horizon of the child; to present the child with what the Self Study calls the "Cultural Heritage."

It is the child's first introduction to the tradition of Western civilization and particularly to Christian learning. It involves bringing the child into direct contact with appropriate great works in all fields—especially literature and music—organized and presented in such a fashion as to be commensurate with his abilities. For example, this would mean an early, direct, and unified consideration of Biblical texts. A work of the type of Father Beron's *With the Bible Through the Church Year* in such a plan would be a regular part of class work, instead of "outside" reading. The faculty at Saint Xavier emphasize the element of solid tradition in this approach. All areas of knowledge make up our cultural heritage, including the study of at least one other language in addition to English (we do not say "foreign" language). The parts of the cultural heritage, according to the Saint Xavier plan, are unified by a philosophy of history and of nature that has deep roots in Sacred Scripture.

THE Saint Xavier theory of liberal education distinguishes carefully the notions of liberal education, general education, and liberal-arts education. Of the three, liberal education is all-embracing and pertains to the acquisition of the intellectual virtues by the student with the cooperation of teachers.

General education is a part of liberal education. It may be defined as a level of competence in the major areas of knowledge below the level of the virtue of science. A generally educated person is not expected to achieve a detailed mastery of the disciplines but should be competent to judge correctly which parts of an exposition are satisfactory and which are not. General education is a conscious attempt to provide the person with a rich background of facts and experiences, covering the content of all the arts and sciences but in a fashion less rigorous and detailed than that involved in the formal study of a special art or science. General education must also provide an insight into the meth-

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ods of acquiring knowledge and wisdom, a historical view of human origins, achievements, and destiny, and an enhanced view of more specialized knowledge by placing it in the context of all learning.

In a democratic society every young person should have the opportunity to achieve some mastery of the liberal arts, including the reluctant and unmotivated, not because the liberal arts are "college preparatory" but because they are the rightful possession of every human being. The tendency to regard liberal-arts education as a superfluous adornment, the mark of aristocracy, and to substitute for it technical and vocational education and "life adjustment" panaceas is a betrayal of the democratic rights of the person for a mess of potage. It is even more urgent for the terminal high-school student to be given a liberal-arts education than the student who goes to college.

For such reasons, and because the liberal arts are intermediate between elementary and higher education, the Saint Xavier Self Study calls for the establishment of a Liberal Arts High School. It will be a number of years until the full program is under way but a beginning will be made in 1955 when the new Liberal Arts High School is scheduled for completion.

The goal of education in a liberal college is wisdom. In a Catholic college, this means Sacred Doctrine. Theology and philosophy, not religion and right opinion, constitute the integrating factor. These studies must be pursued with systematic rigor and exacting scholarship, and involve the use of original texts of the great thinkers of all ages, such as the *Dialogues* of Plato, the works of Aristotle, the *Summa* of Saint Thomas, right down to such contemporaries as Jacques Maritain and Father Garrigou-Lagrange. Negatively, it means the progressive abandonment of dull, mediocre manuals and textbooks. The liberal college should be the *locus* of higher learning, in the precise sense of the term, and not of remedial studies in reading, logic, and calculation. The sciences, humanities, and wisdom make up its major theme while the continuation of the liberal arts and general education from the high school is its minor theme.

Although the student in college should, at some time, be permitted to narrow his program from the broad base of general education it should still cover at least a major area of knowledge—social sciences, humanities, physical science rather than the technical kind of departmentalization and specialization that prevails in the upper years of most colleges. Every program of study in the college should have its proper philosophical dimension, i.e., philosophy of nature for the natural and physical sciences, moral philosophy for the social sciences, aesthetics for the humanities, and metaphysics and theology required for all.

The practical problems in the way of putting the ideas of the Self Study into practice are enormous but the two greatest difficulties are: providing a liberally educated faculty to do the job—on the elementary and secondary levels as well as on the college level; and getting students who are adequately prepared at each level of the educational process. The greatest plan of education will fail if it is taught by technicians to unwilling illiterates.

MOST American teachers are themselves the product of illiberal school systems and though they may have been converted to the ends of liberal education they still lack adequate command of the means.

Extensive plans for the liberalization of teacher education, to go into effect at the new college in 1955, include some of the following features: The control and administration of teacher education will be vested in a group representative of the whole faculty rather than an Education department. Professional training will be postponed until the completion of the collegiate program of liberal studies and concentrated in a fifth year which will be spent in specially designated schools, analogous to a "teaching hospital" in medicine, in a decently paid teaching internship. The school accommodating such interns will have the advantage of part-time teachers, and the interns will not have to bear the cost of additional schooling. The details of the program have been carefully planned and are ready for implementation. An elaborate program of in-service training including formal course work, seminars, lectures, workshops, is also being planned for the present faculty of Saint Xavier's.

The theory of liberal education contained in the Self Study will be put into effect over a period of years and at all levels of the school system but only after teachers are adequately prepared and students properly disposed through previous training. Changes in educational programs have frequently failed because they were instituted with haste, and often without adequate control of the means. One of the principal reasons for the *material* failure of the Hutchins plan at the University of Chicago was that the college authorities had no voice in

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high school or elementary school affairs. The Saint Xavier plan calls for a unified control of all the levels of education under the collegiate faculty which it has already. At the outset, changes will be greatest at the lower levels, gradually working their way upward, although many reforms will not require a waiting period. Nearly one whole school generation will have passed through the system before the new program is in complete operation. The usual forces motivating haste in such ventures in the secular world are absent in a religious community such as the Sisters of Mercy who conduct Saint Xavier: tenure and salaries are not problems and, presumably, everyone is there for the rest of her life. This kind of stability makes possible the most rigorous and thorough-going planning.

The theory of liberal education is geared to the student of average abilities; it is, therefore, intended for all. A conscious de-emphasis of grades and credits and other mass-production educational paraphernalia will make possible what is called the "achievement plan." Under this plan students will progress through each area of learning and through each level of the school system at a rate dependent upon their natural abilities and commensurate with their actual achievements. The elementary school in particular will be non-graded. By eliminating waste and duplication it is hoped that the entire program may save the student from one to two years over present arrangements, thus making possible earlier entry into real adult life: marriage, higher learning, the professions or business.

The faculty of Saint Xavier hope that their plan of liberal education when fully implemented will serve as a demonstration unit to other liberal educators—secular as well as religious—inspire a diversity of programs, and in this way make a significant contribution toward the realization of the full promise of American education.

COMMUNICATIONS

THE ROSENBERG CASE

Montreal

TO the Editors: Despite the views expressed so clearly and so forcibly by Bishop Hunt [December 18, 1953], it unfortunately remains true that many people in many lands felt shocked and even sickened by the execution of the Rosenbergs. Canada is America's nearest and best neighbor. We understand you better than any other people. Yet even in Canada I have found deep concern over this case.

Our attitude is not based on the assumption that American laws and legal processes were not fully complied with. If we thought so, we would deserve His Excellency's strictures. Rather our feelings of uneasiness about this case rest on other grounds.

First of all, although it has been widely stated even in eminent quarters that the Rosenbergs were found guilty of giving information to "the enemy," I believe it is a fact that their crime was committed during the last war. At that time Russia was far from being an enemy, indeed she was being acclaimed widely and officially as a noble ally. If the Rosenbergs had dealt with the British or the French instead of the Russians, can anyone believe for a moment that they would have been executed? And yet why not, for there was little difference in the status of all these peoples as comrades in arms at the time of the crime. The fact that many people now regard Russia in effect as an enemy should have been immaterial to the case. Thus many of us are left with the suspicion that current feelings colored the punishment of an offense committed earlier.

Secondly, as my memory serves me, it was said by the judge who sentenced the Rosenbergs that they had committed an offense worse than murder inasmuch as their treasonable actions might well lead to the death of not one but millions. Much the same thing was reportedly said by President Eisenhower in justifying his refusal of commutation of sentence. But surely such reasoning is unsound. Murder is a matter of fact. The body, the *corpus delicti,* exists; and the action which led to death is proved. But that the action of the Rosenbergs might cause the death of millions is not fact, it merely an opinion concerning a possibility. Even if there were exceedingly strong reasons for so believing, it would still remain an opinion. Moreover it is conceivable that a man might hold the opposite opinion in good faith, that he might believe that in a world in which only one power had the atomic bomb the chances of peace would be improved if another and balancing power also had the bomb. Be that as it may, many of us believe that opinions concerning the possible consequences of the act of the Rosenbergs should have had no place in their judgment and condemnation. Justice should be based on past facts, not on possible consequences.

Finally, there are many of us who felt shame at the way in which, after their sentence, the Rosenbergs were offered commutation if they would implicate others. There is to be found in most systems of justice a custom whereby a member of a gang implicated in some offense may earn the hope of clemency by telling all he knows before the trial. At best, the practice is not particularly attractive. But to sentence people to death and then to dangle before them the hope of commutation if they would implicate others after they had pleaded innocent is a procedure which seems disgusting.

Thus many of us, even among your nearest and best friends, feel profoundly disturbed because of the execution of the Rosenbergs even though we do not ques-

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tion their guilt or the fact that they should have received some degree of punishment. This case is one of the many incidents now poisoning international relations at a time when understanding among the Western nations is more needed than ever.

MURRAY BALLANTYNE.

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: The Commonweal is to be congratulated for its courage in re-opening the debate on the Rosenberg Case. This takes an unflinching trust in man's capacity for not tiring in seeking the truth. By the same token, it is good to read Bishop Hunt's letter —someone cared enough to write again, and at length.

All the judiciary arguments brought forward in the letter can be answered fully, and I leave it to M. Barrat to do so, thereby helping His Excellency to form a more accurate judgment both of the article incriminated and of the "French View" of the Rosenberg Case. Apparently, and surely in perfect good faith, Bishop Hunt misunderstood both.

It is none of my wish to enter into any controversy with Bishop Hunt. It would be wholly out of place. I want only to express here, with all filial respect due a member of the Hierarchy, and, in fact, because of it, the profound distress and sorrow this letter brought me. I find it quite impossible to reconcile my idea of the role of a bishop with this unrelenting, militant upholding of the course of judicial procedure. Even granting the trial to have been fair, it still would seem that the attitude of a bishop could never appear to be centered on a self-righteous approval of legality. That the domain of Christianity is, *par excellence,* mercy, is evident to all at all times. In the Rosenberg case it remained such for thousands of Christians the world over, including His Holiness and French lay Catholics and members of the Hierarchy.

Bishop Hunt's letter leads us to ask ourselves a simple question: How many American lay Catholics, how many American priests, how many American bishops, how many American Cardinals used their Christian birthright of pleading for clemency? Just clemency.

Granted that it is often easier to take a stand in an affair which does not concern one directly, yet I would like to submit here some of the more familiar French Catholic names among those who fought for clemency: people who gave their time, their energy, who signed petitions, went to the American Embassy, held meetings, gathered in churches for prayers, wrote letters, wired former President Truman, President Eisenhower, Cardinal Spellman, and did so over and over again. The press here reported neither the amplitude nor the depth of the movement among French Catholics. Unless one is prepared to accuse the whole Catholic Church in France of being Communist-led and Communist-ridden, who could deny that here is food for thought in the following list: Cardinal Feltin, Cardinal Gerlier, Cardinal Saliège, Cardinal Roques; the Catholic papers and magazines: *L'Actualité religieuse, La Croix, Esprit, La France Catholique, Quinzaine, Témoignage Chrétien;* La Jeunesse Agricole Catholique, La Jeunesse Ouvrière Catholique, La Jeunesse Etudiante Catholique, La Jeunesse Indépendante Catholique, La Conféderation Francaise des Travailleurs Chrétiens, Les Scouts Catholiques, Le Centre Catholique des Intellectuels (among them Gabriel Marcel and François Mauriac), Pax Christi, etc., etc.

This strictly Catholic enumeration shows both conservative and liberal tendencies. Everyone was united in the plea for mercy, and everyone worked for it to the limit. Not because, as Bishop Hunt writes, they feared the Communists in case of execution, but because they agreed with the view expressed in *Civiltá Catolica* (Rome)—"civilization itself faces a choice upon which depends either its acquittal or its condemnation."

That French Catholics bestirred themselves to such a point for mercy's sake shows a deep-seated respect and trust in Christian values. That the atheists shared in this regard may come as a surprise to Americans, but it is a fact and that is the reason why the nation referred to by former General Eisenhower as "morally debilitated and half agnostic" was unable to understand how Americans could remain indifferent and "undisturbed" (cf. Bishop Hunt) while the highest spiritual authorities in France intervened.

That is why, when the end came, the French were hurt to the core of their soul. All classes. They were hurt, not because of hatred, but because of friendship. Despite slogans, flares of temper and talks, there had been that long friendly trust in America, in a common sense of moral values as based on our Judeo-Christian heritage. The French felt they were let down in what they cherished most, and by those they least expected. The moral harm done the United States is incalculable. And may God help America.

CLAIRE HUCHET BISHOP.

THE SCREEN

ROUND TABLE ON A CURVED SCREEN

THE movie makers were wise to hold off on the Arthurian stories until the invention of CinemaScope. "Knights of the Round Table" is a mighty handsome film, with knights in full armor charging across the wide screen and colorful pageantry stretching magnificently across CinemaScope's impressive

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scope. "Knights" was filmed in England (except for some stunning battle sequences photographed in Ireland); the lovely countryside and old castles lend it an authentic air.

My major complaint against "Knights of the Round Table" is that for all its authentic costumes and sets, it seldom strikes a note of reality. And the fault, dear Brutus, is not so much with our stars, who give adequate but rather uninspired performances, under the direction of Richard Thorpe, but with the treatment of the story itself. The makers of any film based on the Arthurian stories must decide whether they are dealing with fairy tales or factual reportage. Producer Pandro S. Berman in this case chose the factual treatment, but his scriptwriters ran into a little trouble in basing their screenplay on Thomas Malory's *Le Morte D'Arthur* and softened the indelicacies of this fifteenth-century version of the legends with a few devices from Tennyson and some twentieth-century devices of their own.

Perhaps one reason why movie makers have avoided the romantic Arthur-Guinevere-Lancelot triangle is that it reads better than it can ever be visualized. On CinemaScope's wide screen the intimate details of the famous affair involving the placid king (played by a bearded and fair-haired Mel Ferrer), his faithless wife (Ava Gardner) and a reluctant Lancelot (Robert Taylor) are not only unconvincing but somewhat silly. Perhaps if "Knights of the Round Table" had been approached as an elaborate fairy tale, it would have turned out to be acceptable as a movie. Actually, it is a kind of filmed pageant. As a pageant, it is a spectacular three-ring-circus treat.

I AM becoming more and more convinced that CinemaScope can be used only for the broad-scale treatment. Whenever the super-colossal screen tries anything personal or intimate, the subject matter seems to get lost. "King of the Khyber Rifles," another new CinemaScope film, is fine as long it is concentrating on the stunning mountainous scenery representing the wilds of India in 1857 or is displaying the exciting battles between the British, who are celebrating the hundredth year of their Indian rule, and rebellious tribesmen, who have different ideas of government. But it is more than a trifle absurd when it concentrates on the plot, which is mainly concerned with Captain King, a half-caste British officer in charge of the hard-fighting Khyber Riflemen, whose villainous brother-by-adoption is the leader of the troublesome natives, and whose sweetheart is the daughter of the commander of the garrison. Just why Captain King (Tyrone Power) is in love with such an empty-headed girl (Terry Moore) is not too clear. But neither is anything else in the picture.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

BOOKS

The Ethics Of Rebellion

MICHAEL HARRINGTON

OUR times are rich in the literature of disillusion. For some, the confession is of the same stuff as the initial betrayal. Koestler is still the glib dialectician and Whittaker Chambers still lives in an unambiguous world neatly divided by a different black and a different white. But for some few the anguish of the twentieth century has produced a fierce integrity, a deep humanity: George Orwell, Ignazio Silone—and Albert Camus.

In *The Rebel* [Knopf. $4.], Camus has written an "ideological history" of our times. His pilgrimage—which began with a meditation on suicide—here approaches its affirmation. The result is not a solution, or a call to the barricades. Camus' hope is far more tentative than that. But in *The Rebel* he has fulfilled a program which he set forth in one of his editorials in *Combat* during the last war: "to introduce the language of morality into the practice of politics."

As a result of this accomplishment, Camus has provoked the violent antagonism of the French "left," and in particular, the hostility of Jean Paul Sartre and *Les Temps Modernes*. The revolutionary cant which is a conservative tradition in French politics finds itself outraged that Camus should insist that Dachau and the NKVD throw a new light on the events of 1848. Yet, by the same token, a United States in which a conservative cant is forever surprised by wars and revolutions may well be as hostile. For Camus still insists on the necessity of rebellion.

The starting point of *The Rebel* is the logical crime. It is a phenomenon peculiar to modern life: the conscious, technological organization of murder, often as not justified in terms of the total innocence of the executioner, be he pure Aryan or proletarian vanguardist. Yet the terrible paradox is that the logical crime proceeded from a revolutionary tradition which was so absolute and uncompromising in its humanitarianism that it sought nothing less than the abolition of crime itself. To understand the ideological process in which the humanitarian rebel became the totalitarian ruler is Camus' central purpose in *The Rebel.*

Camus' analysis proceeds from the total virtue claimed by the Jacobins through the copernican revolt

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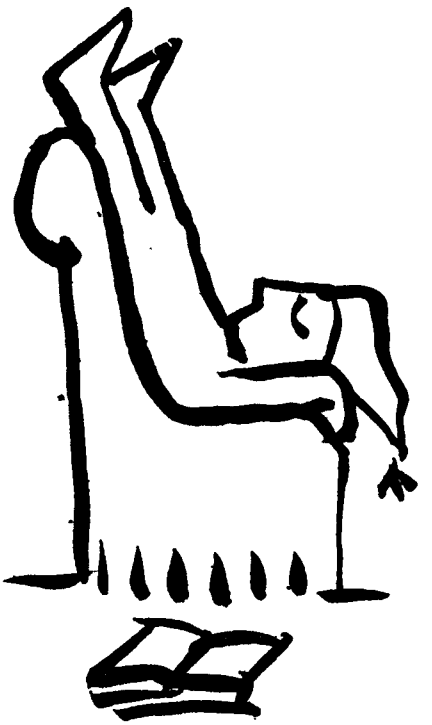
of the Romantics in which man becomes God though God no longer exists; and it ends in the ruin of its most extravagant hope—that history itself should stop and the Kingdom of Heaven begin. As its promise becomes more totally good, its reality becomes more totally evil.

The Rousseauistic Revolution was based on a harmonious world of infallible law. Saint-Just condemned Louis XVI, not for any specific act, but because to be a king was a crime against nature. Yet if the people are free and infallible, how is it that the reign of universal justice does not attend on their victory? The answer of Jacobinism was twofold. Theoretically, it argued that the will of the people was frustrated by factions. Practically, it introduced the Terror. And precisely because they did not think of themselves as acting for their own interest, but for the whole—for Universal Virtue, for Reason—the Jacobins' Terror was all the more violent. It did not seek to establish a political balance of power, but rather a total political harmony. The impossibility of achieving this made catastrophic failure inevitable. In *The Origins of Totalitarianism,* Hannah Arendt uses this same point to distinguish modern totalitarianism from all previous tyrannies: it seeks a logical consistency, a total harmony, of the political life, and not a mere maintenance of power. In tracing the source of this to Jacobinism, Camus has made a significant contribution toward our understanding the terror of our age.

Yet, the revolt of the Romantics in the nineteenth century was, in a sense, even more profound than the revolt of the Jacobins. For the Romantics went to the very heart of the modern problem—to God. Camus treats of Sade, Lautreamont, Rimbaud (though much of this is deleted from the American edition). It is in Dostoevsky, however, that he finds a central intuition. In the name of the dignity of man, of mercy and grace, Ivan Karamazov rejected that God Who would allow a little child to be tortured. But his conclusion from this was that "everything is permitted"—including the torturing of little children. In revolt against a murdering God, he justified murder by the denial of that God. His end was madness. In Ivan Karamazov, Camus locates one of the most significant characteristics of the modern revolution: a passionate avowal of the dignity of man which results in a frenzied destruction of that very dignity.

But it is only with Nietzsche that this nihilism became rigorous and self-consistent. Camus specifically excludes himself from those who would make Nietzsche a literal predecessor of Hitler. He sees his influence as even more profound. For Nietzsche realized that if everything is permitted—then nothing is permitted. If there are no values to inhibit action, then there are none to initiate action. The condition of man, his freedom, lies in his will, his resignation, his acceptance of limitations.



This will wake you up—

THE WATER AND THE FIRE
by Gerald Vann, O.P.

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In Dostoevsky and Nietzsche, man refused God because God allows evil. And as Nietzsche so clearly realized, the next step is for man to make himself God. This was done by identifying man with history, and introducing God into history as its dialectic. This secularized, Providence appeared in the Hegelian tradition. In this tradition, particularly as Marx derives from it, man is not totally virtuous as he is in the world of the Jacobin. Far from it. Until history reaches its final end, man is not virtuous at all. Camus summarizes this difference brilliantly: "For the Jacobin, the whole world is virtuous. The movement which begins with Hegel, and triumphs today, supposes that no one is virtuous, but that all will be."

Marx was a tremendous genius as an economist and methodologist of the social sciences, but in his messianic and apocalyptic aspect he is the source of a totalitarian inspiration. That totalitarianism was personally abhorrent to him (as witness his speech on the Paris Commune) is not the point. Within his own terms, his subjective intent is not relevant to history. His objective effect is, and in this he forms a link in the terrible process which Camus describes.

At this point, I would introduce my major criticism of *The Rebel.* Camus is aware that he is writing an ideological history. He carefully dissociates himself from the view that ideas are the motive force of historical change. Yet I feel that sometimes his own distinction is lost in his book. The ideological force of the messianic element in Marxism was undoubtedly a factor in the development of Stalinism, yet it was far from the controlling factor. Inasmuch as Camus unwittingly gives the impression that he derives Stalinism from the ideas of Marxism, he is open to serious criticism. This is a question of emphasis rather than principle, but it should be stated.

Yet Camus rightly sees a horrible continuity between the Jacobin and the Stalinist revolution: the continuity of destruction. "It is necessary to destroy those who would destroy the idyll, or to destroy in order to create the idyll." Jacobin or Stalinist, it is necessary to destroy.

Having stated the terrible itinerary of revolution, Camus faces the problem of positive action. And here he lives up to the aim which he announced in *Combat:* "to introduce the language of morality into the practice of politics."

AT the very outset of his book Camus proclaims that the impulse to revolt is ethical. In rising up against injustice, man proclaims brotherhood, for he commits his own life to the lives of others, to those who suffer. Camus paraphrases the Cartesian principle: "I revolt, therefore we are."

But in the history of the last hundred and fifty years,

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this ethical basis of revolt has, in every case, been perverted by the Revolution. For the Revolution has attempted to enforce unity by the divisive measures of systematic violence and cruelty. Camus writes, ". . . It is necessary to decide whether we can kill anyone when we move toward recognizing the resemblance between men and consecrating their identity."

By saying this, Camus condemns his rebel to failure —and this is perhaps his greatest positive insight. Camus renounces the total claim of the Revolution. He insists that the ethical impulse which is implicit in the urge to revolt should continue. At the very heart of his book he writes: "The revolt says to us, in effect, that we must act, not that we may be on some future day . . . but as a function of that obscure value which we discover in ourselves now, in the very moment of insurrection . . . In place of killing and murdering for the being which we are not, we must live and act to create that being which we are."

In this, I see a profound resemblance to the final affirmation of Emmanuel Mounier. Mounier wrote that in the French Revolution he would have begun as a Jacobin, gone over to the opposition by the middle of the Revolution, and by its end, would have been killed for defending Royalty.

The total claim has been the terror of our age. In the name of absolute virtue there has been murder, and in the name of history there has been murder. Camus is willing to take the leap which breaks free of this process. By committing himself to an *ethical* revolt, he must, practically, fail. But by acting "as a function of that obscure value which we discover in ourselves now," by recognizing limits, he will always be on the side of the executed. He will never be the executioner. And that is a great deal to say of anyone in the twentieth century.

From *Sisyphus, Caligula, Le Malentendu,* through his great novel, *The Plague,* Albert Camus has been honestly exploring one of the most sensitive consciences which exists in a largely brutalized world. *The Rebel* is a profound book which increases the tremendous debt we owe his honesty.

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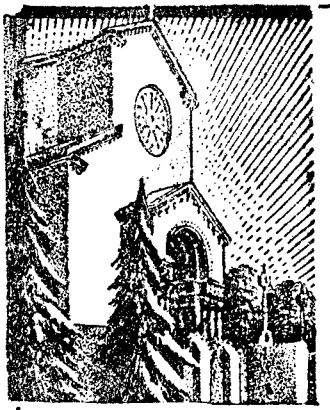

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The Aims of Education

THE UNIVERSITY OF UTOPIA. By Robert Maynard Hutchins. University of Chicago Press. $2.50.

By LEO R. WARD

SINCE 1936, Robert Maynard Hutchins has been the voice of a new theory of education in America. He has had devoted followers, and vigorous opposition. By the time that Mr. Hutchins began to be heard, Dewey was too old and too tired to say much. In 1944, Dewey did take one swipe at any new philosophies not squaring with his own, and another at Hutchins, Maritain and Mark Van Doren, whose educational views, he felt, were out of step with established canons.

Mr. Hutchins' work on the higher learning in America first made him famous. It remains his best book. This and Dewey's work on democracy in education are to date the American classics in educational theory. But Hutchins' name has been a sort of curse word for smaller liberals, so that even some good books on education, evidently influenced by him, do not dare to name him. What evil thing has he done?

In that best book he said we are confused. Everybody agreed. He said the end of education has been neglected, and is really the chief thing to be re-identified. This end, he said, is intellectual excellence or virtue, best reached by a study of nature, man and God. Many of those who have best understood these ends have expressed their results in books. Therefore we ought to learn to read, and we ought to read these books.

In his delightful new little book Mr. Hutchins says the end of education is to think. The college exists to help everyone to think. The university is a center of independent thought. We need to think and to have centers of independent thought. It is good for the rational animal to think and to achieve wisdom. It is good, even if we do nothing with the results. But to think and to try to reach wisdom on the most important matters may help us in ordering a chaotic world.

This last statement is in his new book and it was perhaps the most offending statement in his best book. He keeps saying the two things: to think is good no matter what, and to think is to have the best chance to see the road for rational beings to follow. We could never think too much about nature, man, society and God. We ought not only to risk but to promote endless discussion on these subjects.

That, says Mr. Hutchins, is what his Utopians do. They are said to be shocked to learn that Americans forego liberal education for all in favor of practical, vocational ends and early specialization. It would never occur to his Utopians to subordinate centers of independent thought, to say nothing of society itself, to such ends as military and industrial power, or to gadgets.

The University of Utopia is altogether a charming book, relevant, urbane, needling, and written in one of our best prose styles. Whatever is to be said regarding the ends of education, we wish Mr. Hutchins would either quit talking about the ends of society or begin to say what these ends are and then say what is the relation of this question to the ends of his Utopian education.

A Free Man

THE HEAD AND HEART OF THOMAS JEFFERSON. By John Dos Passos. Doubleday. $5.

By WAYNE ANDREWS

THOMAS Jefferson may best be remembered as the President who refused to stay buried. Embalmed by Calhoun's generation in the South, he was splendidly disinterred by Abraham Lincoln, who fought the debates with Douglas along the line of the Declaration of Independence. Once the Civil War was over, however, the grave of

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our third President was dug again by historians who could see no use for his idealism in the complacent world of the late nineteenth century. But today we know that Jefferson will always be recalled in anxious hours, and we cannot really excuse Woodrow Wilson for writing in 1894 that the master of Monticello was "not a thorough American."

John Dos Passos, the latest and perhaps the most sensitive of all of his biographers, is well aware that the author of the Declaration of Independence is very much with us in 1954 "when the need to take sides in the struggle for freedom to seek individual happiness again confronts every man alive." What is equally important, this novelist turned historian needs no advice from any one on the rules and regulations of the historical profession. Though one may quarrel here and there with Mr. Dos Passos's point of view, it is obvious that he knows a thing or two about the main currents of the age in which his subject moved. He has done much more than the usual boning up; in fact he has explored secondary sources so carefully that the most painstaking graduate students will be alarmed by the extent of his knowledge.

But the best thing about this new Jefferson is that Mr. Dos Passos has not forgotten the tricks he learned long ago as a novelist. More than one character is introduced by a telling sentence which we shall remember long after we have grown too old to bother with biographical dictionaries. And when a point is made, it is made inadvertently, as when the author refers to the statesman's "skill in putting his own ideas into other people's mouths and making them defend them as their own." This, he suggests, "was to be the basis of his extraordinary influence among his countrymen."

It is just possible that Mr. Dos Passos has come closer than anyone else to understanding Thomas Jefferson. He knows, for instance, that the future President was often bored by Williamsburg: "It was not for nothing that he dated several of his letters Devilsburg."

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He also hints, as no one else has hinted, at the loneliness which visited this apparently self-contained man.

Too intelligent for his time—and also for ours—Jefferson never lost faith, Mr. Dos Passos reminds us, in the uncommonness of the common man. "In general," he told his friend Edmund Pendleton, "I believe the decisions of the people, in a body, will be more honest and more disinterested than those of wealthy men."

This was what led him to retire from Washington's cabinet to organize the opposition; with this event Mr. Dos Passos brings his narrative to a close. Let us hope the author won't disappoint us by stopping there, but will publish another volume telling all that happened up until that July 4, 1826, when Thomas Jefferson and John Adams died on the very same day.

The Final Boom

TOMORROW! By Philip Wylie. Rinehart. $3.50.

By JOHN A. LYNCH

THIS is a tract that expands into, and is disguised as, a novel. Mr. Wylie, who has not been the least iconoclast among us, is again at large and taking shots at all and sundry who come across his radar screen. He is, for instance, against Communism, mass hysteria, TV audiences, organized religion, prayer in place of deeds, stuffed shirts and Senator McCarthy. Conversely, he is for freedom, the United States, patriotism, science, agnosticism and, above all, "the gallant men and women" of the Federal Civil Defense Administration, and the CD volunteer, to whom this book is dedicated.

Now this may sound as if Mr. Wylie's hands are tied before he even starts, but such a consideration vastly underestimates Mr. Wylie. I remember reading somewhere that Philip Wylie was capable of writing ten thousand salable words a day, and though I have no idea how long it took him to write this book, I am afraid it is

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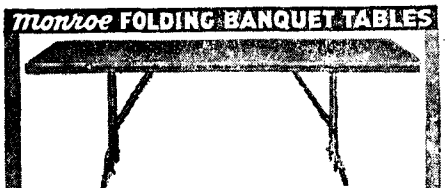
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salable copy, righteous, patriotic, polemic.

It is Mr. Wylie's "beef" about people in general and why we are going to end up H-bombed and A-bombed if we don't watch out; and then, because narrative can be the more convincing to scare us out of our lethargy, he presents a description of the day when "Condition Yellow" turns to "Condition Red" and the bombs fall, wiping out New York, Philadelphia, Washington, Los Angeles, San Francisco, smashing some twenty-five cities between, and in the sister-cities of Green Prairie and River City, the Midwest locale of this story, killing 210,000 people.

It is the year 1961, as close as I can estimate (McCarthy is still in office anyway), and the bomb falls on the sister-cities on December 23rd, catching the Christmas crowd downtown and most everyone else, except the majority of Civil Defense workers, unprepared. But even they, once the siren goes off, are hard put to control the mobs of those who didn't believe it could happen. Mr. Wylie's scenes of death and destruction carry impact if only by the sheer weight of described mutilations, blackened faces, caved-in roofs, bloodied sidewalks and shattered limbs.

Outside of what was Washington, D.C. (the President is dead), a new President is sworn in before the fifty or so members of the Cabinet and Congress who are still around. The question is, should we surrender, as Russia has asked, or should we continue to fight (already Moscow and Leningrad and other unnamed cities have been erased), or should we bring up our super-secret weapon?

The super-secret weapon is voted for and the submarine, *Nautilus,* reoutfitted as a super self-immolating H-bomb, with cobalt in her keel, is dispatched to the Baltic Sea where at the touch of a button it ends "history's last war": "The Baltic Sea erupted . . . Finland was not. Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, they were not . . . Kronstadt melted . . . ." The cloud swelled above the western edge of Russia and thinned out over Siberia. Those who were left, in the south of Russia, begged for peace.

Philip Wylie speaks of waking up "a sleepwalking nation." He shows that his fictional city of Green Prairie, which had an active Civil Defense group and had run through years of practice alerts, suffered, finally, much less than its neighbor, River City, which had ignored Civil Defense altogether. It is a fully-described argument and I think it carries.

In any case, I am sure it is good for Mr. Wylie to have written this book and got if off his chest, and it may be good for many people to read it, but at the risk of being unpatriotic, I think it should be pointed out, too, that the book should not be confused in any way with the novel as an art form, or with literature at all.

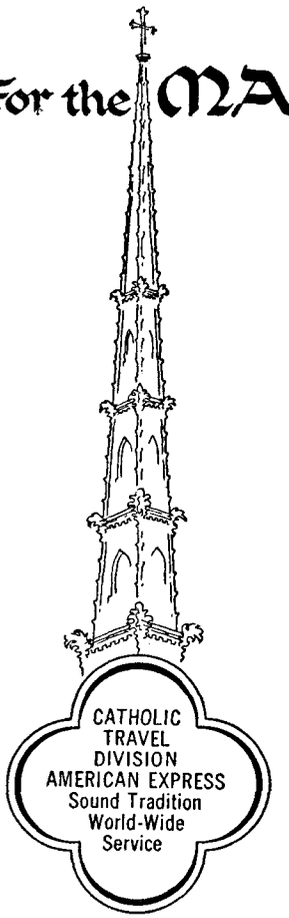
REVIEWERS

Father Leo R. Ward, C.S.C., is a member of the philosophy faculty at the University of Notre Dame.

Wayne Andrews is the author of *The Vanderbilt Legend.*

John A. Lynch is the managing editor of *Ave Maria.*

For the MARIAN YEAR



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In Prospect

Scheduled for publication in The Commonweal the next few weeks, are a number of special articles of more than usual scope and interest. This cross-section of authors and subjects tells much of the nature and quality of The Commonweal:

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William V. Shannon
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